

PORTER-PARSONS FARM  
Worton, Maryland  
(early 19th century)

K-373

Now in ruins, the Porter-Parsons house is interesting because it contains unusual and individualistic interior woodwork which may be the product of a single craftsman in the 1840's or 1850's. A modest two-story frame building, the structure resembles the old house on the Jewell Farm (K-225), a nearby structure, and both were probably constructed for modest farm families in the first half of the 19th century.

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

PORTER-PARSONS FARM

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

West side Route 297, ½ mile  
south of I.U. Crossroads

CITY, TOWN

1st  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Worton

XX VICINITY OF

Kent  
COUNTY

Maryland

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED  
☒ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
☐ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☒ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM  
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK  
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ MILITARY ☒ OTHER Vacant

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Marvin Van Dyke Williams

Telephone #: 301-778-1868

STREET &amp; NUMBER

206 Washington Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code  
Maryland 21620**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Kent County Court House

Liber #: EHP 42

Folio #: 289

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown, Maryland

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

K-373

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Presently located on the Williams farm near Worton, this old house is set back off the road, facing east. All other buildings on the property are modern barns.

The Porter-Parsons house is a frame structure which is 6 bays long and two stories tall. It has a gable roof covered in asphalt shingles, and brick chimneys enclosed in each gable. That on the north has an exposed chimney back. The building is covered with lapped wooden siding and rests on a stone foundation. There is a true 1½ story gable-roofed addition on the south end of the rear wall, and remnants of a 4 bay, shed roofed porch on the front.

The house was constructed in two phases. At first the building consisted of the three bays with the present stair hall and entry. This section of the house probably dates to 1840 or 50 with the remaining bays and rear wing being constructed late in the 19th century. Most exterior siding dates from the latter period.

Windows have 6 over 6 sash and are evenly spaced in the 6 front bays and 2 end bays of the gable, although the earlier bays are the wider. Windows on the rear are opposite those on the front. There are also small square in the attic gables. What may have been a doorway on the east side of the north gable has been closed in. Window trim is plain in newer section, but in the earlier house it has an inside bead and a flat Grecian ogee backband. The roof cornice is unmolded and there are tapered verge boards in the gables; no detail of the porch is visible.

Interior detailing of the older section of the house is very simple, but interesting. The stair is very plain and may date from the later period. It has plain, tapered balusters, an open string, a round handrail, and newels which have been shaped into rough octagons in section. Exterior doors remaining in the stair hall have two vertical panels and large cast iron locks.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

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SPECIFIC DATES 2nd qtr. 19th century BUILDER/ARCHITECT  
late 19th century

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Now in ruins, the Porter-Parsons house is interesting because it contains unusual and individualistic interior woodwork which may be the product of a simple craftsman in the 1840's or 1850's. A modest building, the structure resembles the old house on the Jewell Farm (K-225), a nearby structure, and both were probably constructed for modest farm families in the first half of the 19th century.

The property was in the Porter family in the 19th century, possibly as early as the 1840's, and both sections of the house were probably constructed by them or by their descendents, the Parsons. Part of the farm remained in the family until purchased by the present owner in 1964.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Lake, Griffing & Stevenson. An Illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne (sic) Counties, Md. (Philadelphia: 27 South Sixth Street, 1877.)

Kent County Land Records, Kent County Court House, Chestertown, Maryland

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Marsha L. Fritz, Survey Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Kent County Planning Commission

DATE

778-4600, ext.67

STREET & NUMBER

Court House

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chestertown, Maryland

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

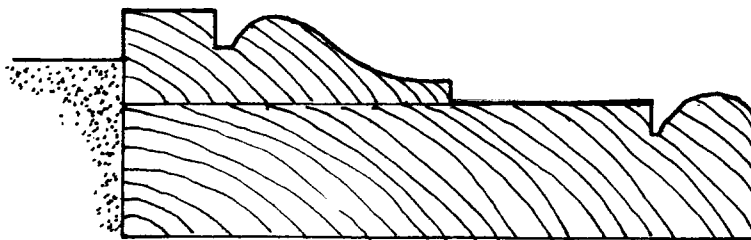
RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

The mantle in the parlour is the most interesting feature of the house. As shown in the photograph dentils and crude Y-shapes have been applied to plain recessed panels. In this room, the window and door trim, shown below, has only two coats of paint; the first is rust brown, the second medium grey. The walls, as elsewhere were whitewashed with later plaster. And the 5"-8" random yellow pine flooring was never varnished. A few rush matts remain on the floor. All of these finishes were typical of simple homes from the late 18th century until the early 20th.

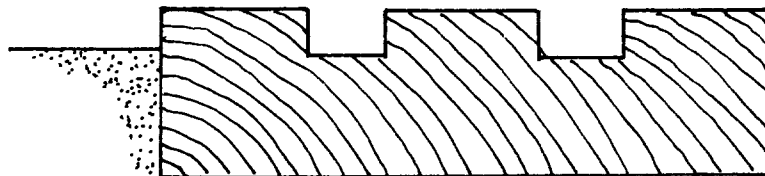
The parlour chamber is low ceilinged and plain with similiar trim and finishes as the room below. The mantle resembles that below, except for the applied decoration. Closets with beaded board doors flank the mantle.

The interior of later section of the building is also very simple, having board doors, plastered walls and ceiling, and unfinished narrow yellow pine flooring. Window and door trim is plain.

Nails removed from the exterior siding on the rear of the building (possibly the original) are early machine-headed nails of the type available from ca 1815 to the late 1830's. That time bracket would appear much too early even for the older section of the house and probably indicates that this kind of nail was in use in Kent County until toward the middle of the century.



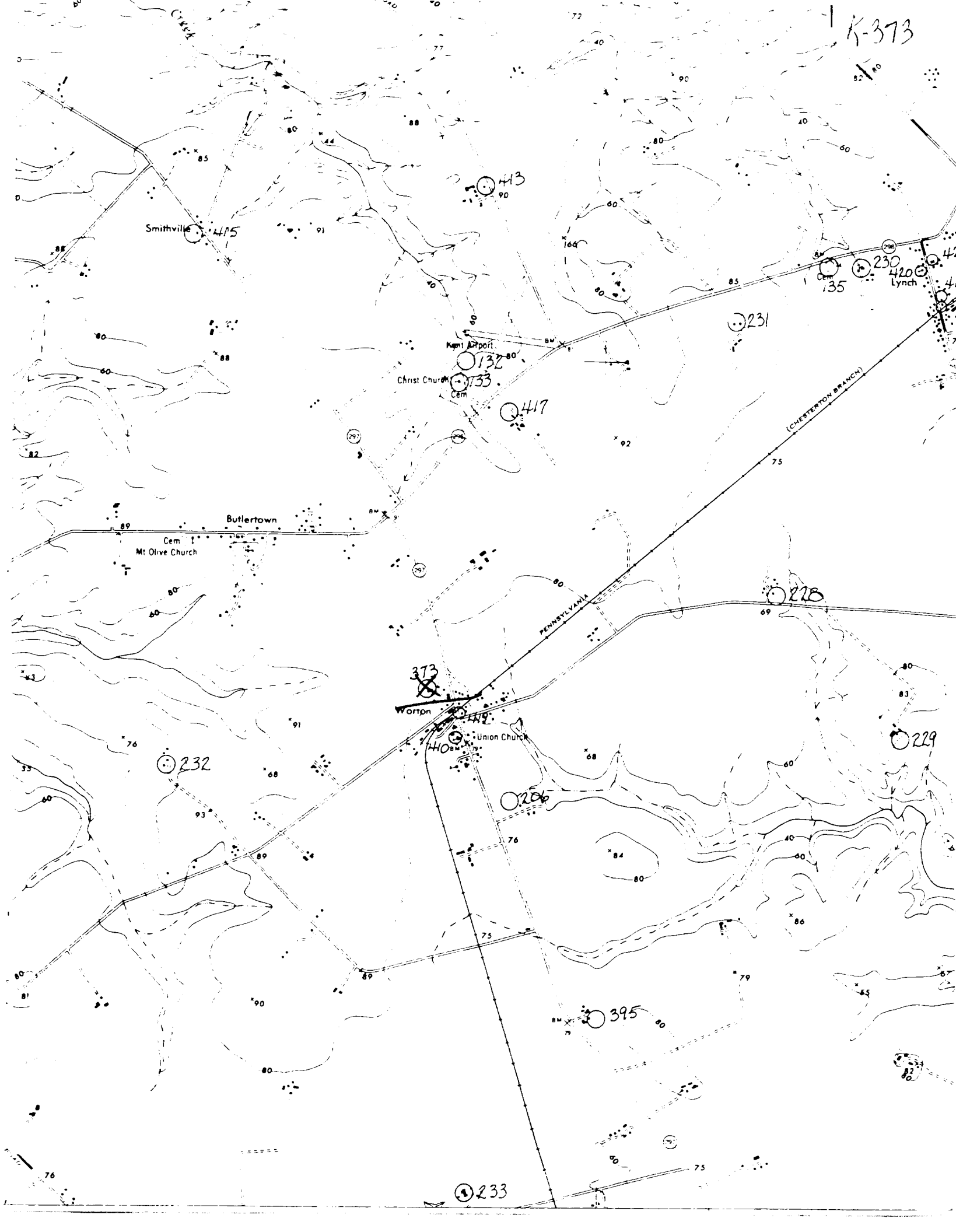
Trim-earlier section of house, interior, and exterior



Trim-later section of house, interior

Full Scale

K-373







K-373

Porter-Parsons Farm

View to West

Worton

Kent County

M.L. Fritz

7/1980

PRINTED BY

*J. Taylor Campbell*

CHESTERTOWN, MARYLAND

JUN 11 1980



K-373

Porter-Parsons Farm

Parlor Mantel

M.L. Fritz

7/1980

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